

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 08915 01 OF 02 251440Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----251445Z 039196 /41

R 251428Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8534
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 08915

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, US, UR, UK, FR, GE, GW, WB
SUBJECT: UK PRESS GUIDANCE ON ALLIED FLAG TOURS

REFS: (A) STATE 119104 (EXDIS)
(B) USBER 1377 (EXDIS)
(C) BONN 8614
(D) LONDON 7552 (EXDIS)

BEGIN SUMMARY: UK REP TO BONN GROUP HAS PROVIDED US
WITH ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON UK PRESS BRIEFING
DESCRIBED IN REFTELS. THE PRESS BRIEFING WAS REPORTEDLY
AUTHORIZED BY HIBBERT WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH UK
EMBASSY BONN AND APPEARS TO BE ENMESHED IN FCO INTERNAL
POLITICAL PROBLEMS WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN RESOLVED IN A
MAY 23 MEETING IN LONDON. SINCE UK REP IS IN A
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 08915 01 OF 02 251440Z

DIFFICULT POSITION IN THIS MATTER, WE REQUEST ADDRESSEES
TREAT CONTENTS OF THIS TELEGRAM WITH APPROPRIATE CARE.
END SUMMARY

1. IN VIEW OF THE BONN GROUP'S PRIOR AGREEMENT TO
MAINTAIN "NO COMMENT" LINE REGARDING ALLIED FLAG TOURS,
THE UK EMBASSY HERE IS RATHER EMBARRASSED ABOUT FCO'S

DECISION TO PREPARE THE EXTENSIVE PRESS GUIDANCE (REF B) ON ALLIED PATROLS. WE WERE TOLD EN MARGE THAT IT WAS AUTHORIZED AT A "HIGH POLITICAL LEVEL," I.E., HIBBERT. UK REP TO BONN GROUP MENTIONED TO THE US REP THE VINE/MORETON CONVERSATION (REF A) ON MORNING OF MAY 24 AND SAID HE HAD NO IDEA HOW THE DEPARTMENT HAD OBTAINED THE INFORMATION (WE DID NOT OFFER TO ENLIGHTEN HIM). LATER IN THE DAY, HE SAID THAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY UK MISSION BERLIN. HE EXPRESSED REGRET AT UK MISSION BERLIN'S ACTION, BUT WE POINTED OUT THAT THE INFORMATION WOULD HAVE PRESUMABLY COME OUT IN THE PRESS WITH ATTRIBUTION TO HMG ANYWAY. HE AGREED THIS WAS THE CASE. HE ALSO SAID THAT UK EMBASSY BONN WAS NOT CONSULTED PRIOR TO PREPARATION OF THE PRESS BRIEFING AND WAS SURPRISED BY IT.

2. APPARENTLY DECIDING ON HIS OWN THAT THE CONTINUED CONCEALMENT OF THE FACTS FROM THE FRENCH AND GERMANS WOULD IMPEDE CURRENT BONN GROUP WORK, THE UK REP INFORMED THE BONN GROUP AT AFTERNOON MEETING ON MAY 24 OF THE PRESS GUIDANCE AND HANDED OUT COPIES OF THE TEXT. HE OFFERED TO REPORT THE BONN GROUP REACTION. FRENCH REP (GAUSSOT) WAS PARTICULARLY SURPRISED (HE IS APPARENTLY THE ONLY ONE NOT AWARE OF THE HIGH-LEVEL FRG LEAKS, NOR HAVE THE GERMANS ENLIGHTENED HIM) AND EXPRESSED REGRET AND DISMAY THAT THE FCO HAD DEPARTED FROM THE AGREED LINE. FRG REP (HENZE) EXPRESSED REGRET BUT WAS SUBDUED FOR OBVIOUS REASONS. US REP
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BONN 08915 01 OF 02 251440Z

NOTED THAT THE UK PRESS LINE PROVIDED MORE GRIST FOR THE PRESS MILL, RECALLED THE PRIOR AGREEMENT IN LONDON (REF D) NOT TO PUBLICIZE THE MATTER. HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT PRESS INTEREST WOULD SUBSIDE.

3. IN PARTIAL DEFENSE OF THE FCO'S ACTION, UK REP NOTED THAT THE GERMAN PRESS AGENCY HAD ASKED ON MAY 20 BOTH WHETHER THE MATTER HAD BEEN DISCUSSED AT THE SUMMIT MEETING ON MAY 9 AND WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN A SOVIET COMPLAINT ABOUT THE FLAG TOURS. THE "FOR THE RECORD" PARAGRAPH OF THE UK TEXT RESPONDED TO THE FIRST QUESTION AND THE "NOT FOR ATTRIBUTION" PARAGRAPH RESPONDED TO THE SECOND. WE ARE TOLD THAT IT APPEARS ONLY THE FIRST PARAGRAPH MAY HAVE BEEN USED THUS FAR AND UK EMBASSY HERE HAS ASKED THAT THE SECOND NOT BE USED.

4. COMMENT: THE FOREGOING SEEMS BOTH TO REFLECT AND DERIVE FROM INTERNAL DIFFERENCES IN THE FCO WITH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 08915 02 OF 02 251438Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----251446Z 039178 /42

R 251428Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8535
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 08915

EXDIS

RESPECT TO BERLIN, WHICH DIFFERENCES MAY BE MORE OF
FORM AND PERSONALITY THAN OF SUBSTANCE. THE UK REP
COMMENTED TO US REP THAT IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE
THE RESULTS OF THE FCO MEETING OF MAY 23 ON
BERLIN (REF C).

5. THE UK REP TO THE BONN GROUP IS OBVIOUSLY IN A
DIFFICULT POSITION AND HAS MADE AN ENDEAVOR TO PERFORM
A "BRIDGING" FUNCTION BETWEEN HIBBERT'S DEMANDS AND
WHAT IS OFTEN A LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE FROM
BONN GROUP REPS OF THE OTHER THREE COUNTRIES. PREPARA-
TION OF SEVERAL STUDIES OVER THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS HAS
BEEN SURPRISINGLY SMOOTH, WITHOUT THE CUSTOMARY WRANG-
LING OVER MINOR DRAFTING POINTS. HOW THESE PAPERS,
PREPARED ON THE BASIS OF US DRAFTS, ARE RECEIVED IN
LONDON MAY GIVE AN INDICATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE
MAY 23 FCO MEETING.

6. IN VIEW OF THE OBVIOUS SENSITIVITY OF INTERNAL FCO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 08915 02 OF 02 251438Z

POLITICS AND THE UK REP'S POSITION, WE REQUEST THAT
THE FOREGOING NOT BE MENTIONED TO UK OFFICIALS. AS
AN EXAMPLE OF THE DIFFICULT POSITION IN WHICH HE
FINDS HIMSELF, HE REQUESTED US REP THAT HE BE ABLE TO
ATTRIBUTE THE BONN GROUP DISCUSSION TO A QUESTION BY
THE US REP ABOUT REPORTS OF OFFICIAL PRESS STATEMENTS
IN WASHINGTON. WE AGREED TO THIS APPROACH.
STOESSEL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INSTRUCTIONS, BERLIN ACCESS, THE PRESS, STATUS OF BERLIN, MILITARY VEHICLES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BONN08915
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770186-1106
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770521/aaaaaruq.tel
Line Count: 181
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9539d18a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: NOFORN, EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NOFORN, EXDIS
Reference: 77 STATE 119104, 77 USBERLIN 1377, 77 BONN 8614, 77 LONDON 7552
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2383067
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UK PRESS GUIDANCE ON ALLIED FLAG TOURS
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, US, UR, UK, FR, GC, GE, WB
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9539d18a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009